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SOURCE Hsin-kuan-ch'a (New Observer) No 15, 1953CONSTRUCTION PROGRESS ON LAN-CHOU -- SINKIANG RAILWAY

[Comment: This report summarizes an article by Kuo Fen-hsiang
describing a visit made between 5 June and the end of July 1953, to
the work site on this railway.]

The Lan-chou -- Sinkiang railway bridge across the Yellow River is
37 kilometers west of Lan-chou. The temporary wooden structure was still in
use. Temporary wooden bridges have also been built at many other places.
The concrete abutments for these are finished; and the temporary bridges are
gradually being replaced by permanent steel bridges.

Ch'ing-ssu-pao and Ta-t'ung-pao are the names of two places passed on
the way to Yung-teng, 103 kilometers from Lan-chou. There are not far from
Yung-teng's abundant underground supplies of limestone, gypsum and coal.
Plans call for the establishment of a large cement plant near Yung-teng.

Beginning 5 June 1953, motor trucks bringing gasoline and other petro-
leum products from the Yü-men oil field transfer their cargoes to the newly
constructed rail line at Lung-ch'uan, 86 kilometers from Lan-chou, for trans-
portation onward by rail. The savings in cost of transport of oil over this
86-kilometer stretch by rail instead of by truck amounts to 1,400 million
yuan per month.

North of Yung-teng the highway and railway parallel the ancient Great
Wall. The roadbed has been graded for a distance of 30 kilometers beyond
Yung-teng. Rails are now being laid on the section north of Lung-ch'uan.
After a 45-minute run by truck from Yung-teng, the Chuang-lang Ho was reached
where the second largest railway bridge west of Lan-chou is being constructed.
Holes 4 meters in diameter and 3 meters deep were being excavated in the river
bed for concrete footings for the bridge piers. Generators, motors, pumps,

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concrete mixers, and large hoists were busily operating. The pumps were being run day and night to dispose of the seepage water that entered the holes at the rate of over 100,000 gallons per hole each 24-hours. Electric lights illuminated the site for night work.

Beyond the Chuang-lang Ho, hundreds of gangs of laborers were making a fill, and tamping each layer of dirt before the next layer was spread. Shortly afterward, Hua-tsaig-ssu, within the borders of the T'ien-chu Tibetan People's Autonomous Region, was reached. Here we saw a number of new-type Soviet and Czechoslovakian made trucks moving heavy equipment along the road. The next place reached was Ta-ch'ai-kou, elevation of 2,600 meters, which is 30 kilometers from the summit of the Wu-ch'iao-ling. From Ta-ch'ai-kou to the top, the road rises 400 meters, and when the railway is in operation, it will be necessary to add another locomotive to take the trains over the summit.

Ch'a-hsi-t'an was reached next, then Ch'en-chia-kou, which is the last station before the entrance to the big tunnel. The latter village is at the 184 kilometer mark, and is the track laying target for 1953. Over the last stretch of 17 kilometers, ten large caterpillar tractors, bulldozers, scrapers, and graders were at work, also shovels with buckets lifting $7\frac{1}{2}$ tons of material at a time. One of these machines can do as much in 4 minutes as it would take four men all day. One of the bulldozers was being operated by a woman, and other women were being trained for similar work.

An-yuan-i was reached over an exceedingly rough road, and then Ku-lang. West of Ku-lang the terrain is relatively flat with few obstacles so that railway construction beyond that point should proceed rapidly.

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